



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Date: March 23, 2025

Scripture Text: John 3:16-21

Series: Believe - The Study of the Book of John

Notes:

John 3 describes a conversation Jesus had with a man named Nicodemus. He was an influential religious leader who wanted to know more about Jesus. Jesus engaged Nicodemus on the topic of salvation; how to enter the 'kingdom of God'. [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) states "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." Salvation has two parts, God's grace and man's faith. God offers His free gift of salvation, but we must be willing to accept it. We have a choice as to whether or not we will accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. In today's passage we see three contrasts Jesus give concerning our choice.

To choose Jesus is...

I. To Choose Life over Death (John 3:16)

The purpose for God giving His only Son was so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. To have eternal life involves being born of the Spirit and knowing God, that is, being in relationship with Him and experiencing all the blessings which flow from that relationship, both in the present and for eternity. To perish means to miss out on these blessings and be separated from God, both now and in the age to come, because the wrath of God remains. For us, the key to experiencing eternal life is believing. The word 'to believe' denotes believing in the person of Jesus.

- What did God do because He loved us?
- What does it mean that God "gave His only begotten Son"? Gave Him for what?
- How would you define the word *believe*?
- How are 'believe' and 'faith' similar?
- How is choosing Jesus choosing life?
- What is the outcome for those who do not choose Jesus?
- Have you chosen Jesus?

II. To Choose Salvation over Condemnation (John 3:17-18)

[Rom. 3:23](#) states that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God". We ALL are under condemnation because we ALL have sinned. It is only by the redemptive work of Jesus, paying the penalty for our sins, that we can escape condemnation. We must choose Jesus to experience His salvation. Condemnation leads to hell! Salvation leads to heaven.



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- Describe in your own words why everyone deserves condemnation.
- What did Jesus do to provide a means for us to be delivered from condemnation?
- What will it be like for the person who dies and hasn't chosen Jesus?
- Who do you know who hasn't chosen Jesus?
- Pray for opportunity to share what it means to choose Jesus.

III. To Choose Light over Darkness (John 3:19-21)

Jesus is the Light ([John 1:4-5](#)). To choose Jesus is to choose the light. For those who reject Jesus choose to live in the dark. They love the dark because they love their sin and seek to not have it exposed. The believer wants the light. Living in the Light, there is no shame, there is nothing to hide, only to 'shine for Jesus'.

- How is 'light' and 'dark' metaphors for Jesus and sin?
- Do you know anyone who says they are saved, yet 'walk in darkness' (continue practicing their sin)?
- [John 3:21](#) describes the person who 'practices the truth'; comes into the light. What does it mean to *practice the truth*?
- How can practicing the truth help you stay in the light?

"[John 3:16](#) tells us: Because the Father deeply loves us, He sent His Son in human flesh to live on earth and to save us by dying. This is no shallow love. Some people question Jesus' sacrifice, though. They think, Certainly the Lord could have come up with a different way to offer salvation. He is God, so shouldn't He be able to do all things? They fail to consider two of His unchangeable attributes. First, God is holy by nature. This means He cannot look upon sin with approval. Second, He is just. As a result, all wrongdoing—without exception—must be dealt with ([Romans 6:23](#)). We all fall short of God's perfect holiness ([Romans 3:23](#)). But our heavenly Father desires an everlasting relationship with us, so He provided the solution by sending His Son Jesus here to live as a man and then die on the cross. This is the ultimate expression of love. As 1 John 4:10 states, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.""

Charles Stanley